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UNCLAS YEREVAN 000142

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MCA COMPACT PROPOSAL NEARS COMPLETION -
RAILWAYS NOW IN THE MIX

Sensitive But Unclassified -- Please protect accordingly.

1. (SBU) During a January 25 meeting with Embassy and USAID representatives, GOAM Deputy Minister of Finance and Economy Tigran Khachatryan said that the GOAM's consultants were nearing completion on the MCA compact proposal and expected to present a copy to the GOAM MCA Board by February 10. After the Board discusses the draft, the GOAM plans to take 10-15 days for "final revisions" and then open a round of public consultations to discuss the document. Khachatryan said the timeline had been pushed back due to both technical issues related to the drafting of the compact and because key players - including himself and the Minister of Finance and Economy - had been absent recently due to medical problems.

2. (SBU) Khachatryan said the draft compact proposal now included a portion dedicated to railway projects. He reported that the decision to include railway infrastructure improvement in the proposal was a recent development and was supported by the Prime Minister's office. While Khachatryan could not provide more detail as to the nature of the railway proposal, he suggested it would involve improvements to already existing lines or the creation of new branches that would feed into Armenia's international rail links.

3. (SBU) Post will continue to provide updates as more information becomes available.
EVANS